**Course Experience**

The Graphic Design Principles I course was not what I originally expected it to be. Due to my previous experience in Communication Design classes, I initially anticipated the usage of computer programs such as Adobe Photoshop, but instead had to rely on more tactile procedures. The course mainly required students to draw and paint by hand with an array of tools. Upon learning this, I felt like I was in foreign territory; I was surrounded by students who drew for most of their lives and intended on being employed in the industry. Meanwhile, I was a professional and technical writing major with virtually no prior experience in this area.

As expected, my lack of experience and knowledge caused the course to be more challenging. My hand was far too unstable to draw and color perfectly, I had no idea what most of the supplies I bought were, and I wasn’t properly acquainted with the ruler. Naturally, I was frustrated. Simple projects such as drawing perfectly aligned squares and rectangles became rocket science. But I had no intention of giving up; I decided to closely observe my classmates’ work and their approach to the arts. I attempted to imitate several styles throughout the classroom, but to my dismay, mimicry would only get myself so far. In order to obtain a nimble hand and analytical eyes, a studious and diligent altitude was required. As expected, I was forced to take extra time to master the craft.

After countless hours of trial and error, my anger grew to joy. I became familiar with most of the required tools and my technique and confidence had drastically improved. Each project was being completed more swiftly and exceptionally than the last. Upon receiving my first perfect result for a hands on project, I knew that I was headed in the right direction.

Throughout the course, I would not only learn about creating the perfect shape, but also have a better understanding on the nuances of successful advertising. During each class session, the professor would present several advertisements from the New York Times style magazine, a highly regarded and expensive fashion publication. Despite each ad taking a minimalistic approach, they effectively inform its audience of their product with ease. As such, I learned that less is more because a consumer will glance at an advertisement for only so long; failure to understand an ads message will cause them to quickly jump to another page. Therefore, a focus on white space, perspective, and narrative among others, will lead to a memorable advertisement that obtains its goal.

Nearing the end of the semester, my newfound skills were to be put to the test for one last project. Each concept that the course taught were to be used to create a piece that represents “going green” with Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator. Despite being well versed in these programs, the assignment proved to be challenging as I struggled for weeks to not only decide on an idea, but to create the perfect balance of both color and shape. Each curve had to flow with one another and all colors had to be in harmony. Once again, I asked the professor and other students for their advice on furthering my project.

Ultimately, I used their best judgment to finalize my going green project. Each color and curve worked with one another to create a story of being environmentally friendly. Days later, it was put in display near the classroom. Now whenever I pass by it, I remember all the hard work I have done throughout the semester. I remember everything I learned about Communication Design from Graphic Design Principles I, and most importantly, I remember how proud I was to see the finished piece.